

ABSTRACT

An ear tag for identification of animals includes a male portion which a punch that perforates the animal's ear and penetrates into the hollow head of a female portion. The female portion is provided with a sampling device which extends laterally to the female tag portion and is separable. When the ear of the animal is pierced by the punch biological material is absorbed by absorbent material carried by the sampling device. The sampling device is linked to one of the jaws of the applicator used to apply the ear tag to the animal. When the jaws of the applicator are opened and the applicator is removed from the animal's ear the sampling device is separated from the ear tag, which is left installed in the animal's ear.